

To Whom it May Concern,

The Definition of Equality when referenced is "the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities." The current proposal for what is considered equitable funding through ECS is a direct contradiction to that definition denying our students, staff and families rights and opportunities such as safe and clean school buildings, up to date curriculum and materials and proper staffing levels. In the fiscal year 2013-14, New Britain was ranked 157th in per pupil expenditures at \$12,842, while the State average was \$15,180. As New Britain Board of Education President Sharon Beloin-Saavedra stated "Equity is not everyone receiving the same...it is receiving what you need."

As an elected official on the Common Council in the City of New Britain, I can confidently state that we have one of the best education systems in the State. Our staff and students get by day to day with the adversities such as over crowded classrooms, buildings that are literally falling apart and budgets for supplies that are far less superior than our neighboring school districts because we don't have what we need. Getting by day to day however isn't fair to our students and staff. As many have mentioned, status quo would mean \$5.3 million more in funding this year to meet teacher contract increases and other contractual raises. Anything less would result in devastation for our students and their families, layoffs, elimination of programs and lack of support services. The Mayor and the Common Council have been working hard to provide what funding we can to the district. Our city has a tax base that is growing, but is not at a level that affords the needs of this great school district. Our city has one of the highest mill rates and recently raised taxes by 11% to close deficits and create a stable budget.

Governor Malloy's plan (SB-942) to allocate increased funding to Charter and Magnet Schools simply does one thing: pushes the City of New Britain School System further down the list, diminishes the efforts of our quality staff and insults the tax payers who count on the district to meet state requirements for achievement.

I strongly urge the members of the Education Committee to re-evaluate the definition being used for the word EQUALITY. Use creative thinking and new ideas to help a great city and a great school district meet and exceed the requirements set by said Committee. Why should we have to suffer at the mercy of being under funded when our students and staff work as hard as they can each day to be successful.

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City of New Britain Common Council
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